

THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN

AND

# Record of Unitarian Worthies

BEING A HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN REFORMATION OF RELIGION IN EUROPE AND AMERICA  
DURING THE LAST THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS.

With some Account of the most Notable Works written by Unitarians.

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## HOWARD AND WESLEY.\*

BY DR. BELLOWES.

THERE are two characters belonging to the last century who may be said, in different ways, to have left a stronger impression on the world than any other two men of their time, who were not connected with political, scientific, economic, or literary affairs; both Englishmen, both cosmopolites, and both originators of movements that have swept over the whole face of the earth, and drawn the admiration and sympathy of successive generations to their respective undertakings; but men whose influence continues and increases—who have taken their places among the permanent ornaments and benefactors of their race—John Wesley and John Howard. Wesley, the elder, was born in 1703, and died in 1791. Howard was born in 1726 and died 1790, one year only before his great contemporary. They resembled each other even in person, both being men of light weight, spare, under-sized, and of ascetic and self-denying habits. Both were men unconformed to the world, and living habitually in view of another state of being; both intensely religious and Christian in faith and temper; both eaten up with a zeal for the welfare of their fellow creatures; both self-subsistent and self-relying men, so far as dependence on human sympathy is concerned. Both were men of immense powers of work, who never spared themselves when personal sacrifices of ease, sleep, food, society, friendship, could advance their unselfish aims. Both possessed unflinching courage, and met the

prejudices, passions, and perils of unpopular causes, and of rude and violent classes, with the firmest, calmest, and most controlling will. Both were equally marked by invincible convictions, a single and undeviating aim, an indomitable resolution which success could not intoxicate nor opposition tame. Both were practical men of great executive ability, aiming at clear and definite ends, with clear-cut purposes, and little embarrassed by speculative misgivings, self-distrust, or deference to others' opinions. Both relied mainly upon their own personal judgment, their own personal exertions, their own self-sacrificing spirit and labours for their success. Both were intensely Protestant in their principles, and intensely Papal in their sense of infallibility—men who could only lead, not follow; govern, not obey. Both were wholly consecrated to their aims, above the temptations of riches and honours; holding pomp, place, ostentation, ease, money, applause, in contempt, and freely spending all they possessed or created at the service of the needy. They both lived on horseback, and were, in an age of obstructed intercourse, ubiquitous—traveling by night and by day with a speed practically equal to that which even modern facilities afford to self-indulgent travellers.

Wesley is computed to have journeyed a quarter of a million of miles in his voluntary itineracy, chiefly on horseback; and Howard probably travelled in the same way, in a life twenty years shorter, half as far. But what he lacked in miles was made up in the variety of the countries he visited, the scope of the circuits he made, the character of the obstacles and perils he encountered, and the solitary nature of his pursuits.

Wesley encountered personal passions, hatred, scorn, violence, ignorance, and cor-

\* The readers are to understand that the outside pages are to be distinguished from the "Unitarian Record," and are not to be bound with the "Record." So they are numbered differently.



tempt—was pelted with stones and garbage, with lampoons and polemic abuse; had knives and pistols drawn upon him; encountered mobs and soldiery—was in frequent danger of his life. Howard faced dangers more fearful to brave men—gaol-fever, pestilence, plague, and the apathy of all the best portion of society. Mobs and persecution might have supported his courage by the anger and defiance they rouse, but he needed no such stimulants. He was brave, without witnesses or visible enemies; without excitement or organised opposition: not braver than Wesley, for who could be? but as brave under more depressing circumstances. Wesley's weapon was his tongue, cloven with the flame of the Holy Spirit. With it alone he carried his way through all opposition, calming tumultuous mobs with its spell; subduing violent and wicked spirits with its divine meekness and power, and converting, like the first apostles, thousands in a day. And what his never-silent nor weary tongue did not accomplish, his ever-active pen did—keen, plain, with less ink and more blood in it than any pen that ever wrote so much—a pen that uttered things, not words—terse, unornamented, wholly to the purpose, vigorous and decisive. Howard had no cunning in his tongue nor in his pen: not a man of thought nor of words, but a man of action; his weapon was an eye to see, to search, to penetrate to the very bottom, to pursue into every hiding-place the evil and curse that had aroused his mingled sense of justice and humanity. He hunted down the prison wrongs of the world with the chivalric devotion of a Spanish knight, or the spirit of Sir Lancelot, in solitary pursuit of the Holy Grail. He collected facts with the zeal, the labour, and the patience of a modern Darwin, in solitary explorations in distant countries whose tongues he did not speak, and from the deepest dungeons, the most poisoned plague-spots, the dreariest and most hateful holes, in which the moral and social fungi, whose natural history he sought, were to be studied and described. Slow and deliberate, cautious and intent, he spared no pains, he shunned no dangers, he left unturned no stone, he hurried to no conclusion, he repeated his observations, he examined and re-examined his facts; and then, without art, circumlocution, rhetoric or self-display, mainly by the aid of others, laid them calmly before the little world who then read books and left them to work their effects.

Wesley was an organiser of the first order. He knew how to win, how to hold, and how to use other men. Solitary in plan and purpose, he was eminently social in method and co-operative in means. He builded as fast as he collected materials. It was no disembodied, uninstituted work, the diffusion of ideas as a spirit, that occupied his formative and shaping brain. He was a Churchman in every fibre, and he aimed at visible, methodic ends—the great methodist, who swept thousands of the ablest and most earnest souls of his generation into the ranks of his cause, organised them with an almost military drill, uniformed them with precise opinions, badged them with similar phrases and methods, and left them a distinct corps in the Church Militant, with a polity of their own, to make conquest at last of twelve millions of people, who are destined to multiply into scores of millions before the life Wesley gave them has found any superseding rival or absorbent. Howard was a prophet and not a priest; a prophet of action, no organiser, no founder; an impulse, an example; an alarm bell; a trumpet heard in the night. He was a sort of John Baptist, his meat locust and wild honey, crying in the wilderness, "Repent, repent!" Solitary, difficult to work with, and wholly lonely in labours and in aims, he built up no work—he laid the foundations of no scheme—he became the architect of no system. But he drew the attention of the world and fastened it upon the cruelties, the inefficiency, and the inhumane and unchristian character of the dark prison territory. Nay, by his exalted devotion, the noiseless enthusiasm of his labours, the purity and intensity of his zeal, his absolute, uncalculating humanity, he made his name not only a landmark but an inextinguishable voice—which has ever since sounded through the nations—demanding attention to prisoners' rights and claims. He who can thus gild his own name with mercy and truth, until it shines over all lands with the glory of an unsetting constellation—who can turn its very letters and syllables into a universal language, until it becomes a spell, a synonym for humanity, a rally for the prisoner's relief—has joined the small company of the immortals in human history, and is among the saints, apostles, martyrs, who stand nearest to the Head of the glorious company in heaven.—*From "The Life of Howard," by Dr. Bellows.* A copy, post free, price sixpence. Address H. Brace, 178, Strand, London.



## JESUS CHRIST.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

A GREAT prophet was Jesus of Nazareth. In his life you will find a singularly lucid illustration of what I have already said on inspiration and prayer. Some may think, in fact it has often been contended, that throughout his public career he systematically endeavoured to exalt himself at the expense of his Maker and Creator. I think otherwise. I fully believe that he was not proud, but "meek and lowly in heart." Not a single word have I to this day discovered in his recorded utterances in the Gospel which militates against my deep conviction that he believed, with his whole heart and soul, in the doctrine of self-abnegation. Nay, it seems to me to be an utter moral impossibility that Jesus could have thought or believed otherwise. Self-annihilation was his mission. That he taught, for that he lived, and to that he bore witness in death. He would have been untrue to himself had he even in thought proudly exalted and glorified himself. He would have ceased to be Jesus. In his private and public life, in his prayers and conversations, in his ministry and in his last words, he consistently denied self and glorified God. Take his words—how simple and unmistakable! "I can of mine own self do nothing;" "The words which ye hear are not mine;" "I live by the Father." Consider these transparent testimonies, which clearly reveal his inner self, and tell me if it is possible to misconstrue them. No, you cannot misconstrue them, twist their meaning as you may. They furnish the most conclusive evidence of the impossibility of charging that great prophet with a proud attempt to arrogate Divinity. He repeatedly said that he was nothing, and had no power save that conferred by God. "Not my will but thy will,"—that was the burden of all his prayers, and the motto of his life. The complete abnegation of self he taught and lived, for the glory of God's name and the salvation of mankind. He wholly surrendered himself to God, and dedicated his will to the Divine. How? By inspiration. He was baptized, and lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and the spirit of God descended and lighted upon him. And a voice was heard proclaiming the acceptance of the beloved son by the Father. What does this beautiful and significant narrative mean? Evidently this, that when Jesus was inspired by the Holy Spirit he gave up his earthly life, entered into heavenly life, and was admit-

ted into loving communion with his Father. Such is the glorious change effected by the inspiration of God. This new birth is known only by its effects. The course which inspiration takes is indeed mysterious. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—*Brahmo Somaj Address*, 1873.

## "TO THE FRONT!"

BY JOHN MACLEOD.

You "thought such aims were out of place." . . .  
 "Twere best to do as others do" . . .  
 "To be advised" . . . "You ne'er had failed" . . .  
 "I ought to rest content like you" . . .  
 O base contentment, born of sloth!  
 O counsel of a craven soul!  
 Better my loss than all your gain,  
 My very failure than your goal!

What though I fail? Am I the first?  
 Or am I shamed, because I fail,  
 That such a heart as yours should beat,  
 With triumph as you tell the tale?  
 You fail—not you! I doubt it not.  
 You never knew defeated pride.  
 They well may win whose aims are base;  
 They scarce can fail who ne'er have tried.

To pierce the hidden core of Truth,  
 To find some footing which is sure,  
 To wed high thought with loving words,  
 And lead a life which shall endure  
 When all these street-cries of the crowd  
 Shall have left the ear for aye—  
 Not such the hopes that crown your years,  
 And lead you on from day to day.

You have no "taste" for deep pursuits,  
 Nor any hope beyond the hour;  
 Content to win some hodman's praise  
 With poor conceits of shallow power;  
 Tossing cheap wisdom, neatly dressed  
 And gilded, to a gaping crowd;  
 "Discerning" all things—Not like those  
 Who "wrap their meaning in a cloud."

O pert in speech and small of heart,  
 While half of it is filled with gall,  
 The first to hear, the first to sting,  
 And tell it when your betters fall.  
 Thrice better were it now to die,  
 While striving for the great and just,  
 Than drag three lifetimes out like thine,  
 And batten on such poisoned dust!

But pass. I choose to die, or reach  
 The forefront where the bravest bleed.  
 Keep thou the rear, and leave to men  
 Less greatly-meek to take the lead.  
 But spare them when they chance to fall;  
 For, trust me, noblest souls are those  
 Who, failing, rise, and strive anew,  
 And mix in battle to the close,



## WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

CAREFULNESS OF SPEECH.—We should walk through life as through the Swiss mountains, where a hasty word may bring down an avalanche.

NOMINALLY, freedom is on the tongues and pens of the age; it is the declared aspiration of millions; yet, as generally conceived, it is but a misty imagination, little understood and but seldom really desired.

SPIRIT OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PRESS.—The *New York Tablet*, a Catholic family journal, says that, compared with the ranting and canting Methodists, the Presbyterians are respectable, but they are outside of the Church of God, and are its bitter and unrelenting enemies.

ORIGINAL SIN.—Lyman Beecher could "put things" in most quaint and striking ways. His biographer states that when he wished to refute the dogma that every one sins "because the appetites and passions are developed faster than reason," Dr. B. said: "It is by this theory as if God had placed a man in a boat with a crowbar for an oar, and then set a storm on him! Is the man to be blamed if in such a case he is drowned?"

LONG SERMONS.—We have lately been looking over a collection of English sermons nearly three hundred years old, and we find that the long-winded Puritan preachers in some instances used the same text as often as twenty times. A chaplain of Cromwell's army preached eight hours upon the word "pomegranate," taken from the description of the priestly robes of Israel, and then announced that he would postpone the remainder to the next day.

"CHRISTIANITY alone," says Dean Stanley, "claims to be founded not on fancy or feeling, but on Fact and Truth." Even Mahomet did not pretend to work miracles, though repeatedly urged to do so, but insisted on the gift of vision and prophecy, of which there was no proof beyond his own assertion. On the occasion of his pretended night-journey to heaven (for no doubt Mahomet went there as really as Swedenborg did), Ayesha testified that he did not leave his bed.

SHARP.—M. Ernest Renan does not often appear in the Parisian *salons*, and received but scant encouragement, the other evening, to repeat the exception he had made. The witty Madame O—— could not resist the temptation to corner the smart writer, and at the conclusion of some verbal ferocity, said, "Well, M. Renan, although you think so ill of the apostles, there is one who I am sure you would treat as a *confrère*." "Which one, madame?" "Saint Thomas, monsieur."

PRACTICAL HINTS.—The Sunday-school at Wakefield, Massachusetts, has a capital way of adorning its walls. All the pictures are bought by the contributions of the scholars, and so every few months a present is made to the school by some class which has saved funds enough to buy some engraving on which its heart is set. Think what an interest must thus grow about each picture, and then see if the fashion is not worth following. The Sunday-school at Lynn has also a good plan for increasing its library. Several of the classes contribute weekly for books, and when enough money has been got together the class decides what book it will buy. Then the book is read by each member of the class, and afterwards given to the school. Some of the classes buy in this way a book every month, always the newest and best in the market.

SIR WATKIN W. WYNNE, talking to a friend about the antiquity of his family, which he carried up to Noah, was told that he was a mere mushroom of yesterday. "How so, pray?" said the baronet. "Why," continued the other, "when I was in Wales, a pedigree of a particular family was shown to me; it filled five large skins of parchment, and near the middle of it was a note in the margin: 'About this time the world was created.'"

UNITARIANISM.—The foundations of Unitarianism, as I have been taught and have surveyed them, are as broad as the New Testament, which it receives as the inspiration of the Divine mind, neither desiring to add anything to it, nor daring to subtract anything from it. . . . The great distinguishing characteristic of the Unitarian body is, that they profess to call no man master upon earth, and that they act up to that profession.—*Josiah Quincy*.

CONVINCED OF GOD.—About eight months ago a very respectable-looking man appeared in the witness-box of the court at Cincinnati. When he was called upon to testify, he said he could not take the oath, and wanted to be excused, as he did not believe there was a God. I said, "Do you believe that you exist, yourself?" He said he did. Said I, "Why do you believe so?" He said, "Because I am conscious of my existence." I then said, "Who gave you that consciousness?" He thought a moment, and said, "I will be sworn."—*Judge Storer*.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION.—The late Professor Sedgwick did not belong to any of the distinctive Church parties, but he delighted to consider himself a thorough Protestant in doctrine and discipline, and a follower of those strong men who effected and consolidated the great work of the Reformation in England. During his last residence in Norwich Professor Sedgwick dictated this eloquent conclusion to a scientific notice:—"My labour is its own reward. It gave me health, and led me into scenes of grandeur which taught me to feel in my heart that I was among the works of the great Creator, the Father of all worlds, material and moral, and the Ordainer of those laws out of which spring all phenomena within the ken of our senses or the apprehension of our mind. I know there are many who deny the sound teaching of this lesson, but I thank God that I have been taught to receive these lessons as a part of God's truth; and it was my delightful task to point out year by year to my geological class the wonderful manner in which the materials of the universe were knit together by laws which prove to the understanding and the heart of man that a great, loving, intellectual, and active Power must be the creative head of the sublime and beautiful adjustments and harmonies of the universe."

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